

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated November 22, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on February 22, 2007. Applicant has made amendments to the specification paragraphs 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 29, and 47, to cancel matter asserted by the Examiner to be new matter. Claims 1-28 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 10-18, and 20-24 have been amended to more clearly recite the invention. Claims 2 and 19 have been canceled. New Claims 27 and 28 have been added. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced in this response.

Specification

The Examiner asserts that the phrase "at close range" introduced in the amendment filed November 21, 2005 [in paragraphs 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 29, and 47] "are newly introduced and not adequately defined in the original disclosure as filed and therefore are considered new matter." The Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's assertion. However, in the interests of advancing the application to allowance, the Applicant cancels all occurrences of "at close range" in amended paragraphs 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 29, and 47.

The Examiner asserts that the phrase "orifices, such as nozzles" introduced in the amendment filed November 21, 2005, in paragraph 29 "is newly introduced and appears to be an improper attempt to broaden the scope of the originally disclosed "nozzles" and therefore is considered new matter." The Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's assertion. However, in the interests of advancing the application to allowance, Applicant cancels the portion of the phrase considered by the Examiner to be new matter, namely "orifices, such as" in paragraph 29.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-17 & 23-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. The Examiner asserts that the “Applicant’s original disclosure is silent with respect to blowing air “simultaneously” through a pair of arms and therefore such language is considered new matter. The Applicant respectfully traverses this statement. However, in the interests of advancing the claims to allowance, the independent claims 1, 11, and 23 as currently amended do not include the word “simultaneously”. Dependent Claims 3-10, 12-17, and 24-26, which depend from claims 1, 11, and 23, respectively, also do not include the word “simultaneously.” The Applicant therefore believes that that the Examiner’s rejection has been overcome and that claims 1-17 & 23-26 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S. C. 112, second paragraph. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of Claim 19. However, in the interests of advancing the claims to allowance, the Applicant has canceled claim 19.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-4, 10-12, 17-19 and 23-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Todd-Reeve in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,646,769 (O’Brien). The Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s rejections. However, to more clearly recite the invention and in the interests of advancing the claims to allowance, the Applicant has amended Claims 1, 3, 4, 10-12, 17-18, and 23-24. The Applicant has canceled Claims 2 and 19.

Claims 5-9, 13-16, 20-22, and 25-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,868,835 (Todd-Reeve) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,646,769 (Hereinafter O’Brien), as applied to claims 1-4, 10-12, 17-19, and 24, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,305,484 (Hereinafter “Fitzpatrick”). The Applicant

respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections. However, to more clearly recite the invention and in the interests of advancing the claims to allowance, the Applicant has amended Claim 7, Claim 1 (from which Claims 5-9 depend directly or indirectly), Claims 13-16, Claims 20-22, and Claim 23 from which Claims 25-26 depend.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the limitations of Claim 2. Furthermore, amended Claim 1 recites relevant limitations of Claim 3 of U.S. Patent 7,060,106 (Kleker '106) issued to the Applicant and the subject of a terminal disclaimer. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 1 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 3 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced in amended Claim 1.

Claim 2 has been canceled because Claim 2 recites limitations, which are found in amended Claim 1.

Claim 3 has been amended to correct grammar and provide antecedent support, and to depend from Claim 1 instead of canceled Claim 2.

Claim 4 has been amended to remove an ambiguity and more clearly recite the invention. Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced.

Claim 7 has been amended depend from new Claim 27, which in turn depends from Claim 4. Claim 7, and thus correct antecedent support. Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced.

Claim 10 has been amended to correct antecedent support and to depend from new Claim 27, which in turn depends from claim 4, also to correct antecedent support. Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced.

Claims 5-6 and 8-9 are original or previously presented claims and depend directly or indirectly from amended Claim 1.

As a matter of law, any dependent claim that depends from an allowable independent claim cannot be obvious and/or anticipated in and of itself. See 35 U.S.C. § 112, 4. Since the Applicant has shown the allowability of independent base Claim 1, the Applicant contends dependent Claims 3-10 of the present application are also allowable for at least the above reasons.

Claim 11 has been amended to reflect relevant limitations of Claim 11 of Kleker '106. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 11 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 11 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. Amended Claim 11 includes insertion of the word "stationary," which is supported at least in paragraph 28, last sentence of the original specification, specifically, "A hanger alignment mechanism may also be used to secure the garments in a relatively fixed position during the operating cycle." Amended Claim 11 includes the insertion of the phrase "one or more." The insertion is for consistency with occurrences of the same phrase elsewhere in amended Claim 11 and therefore not new matter. Amended Claim 11 further includes insertion of the phrase "toward both sides of the one garment" which is supported at least in paragraph 50, final sentence, specifically, "The manifold 40 may move up and down the length of the hanger-mounted garments 26 blowing air or steam on both sides of garments 26."

Claim 12 has been amended to remove a claim limitation found in amended Claim 11, and to more clearly recite the invention. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced. The Applicant further believes that the amended Claim 12 is supported at least in paragraph 7 of the original specification and in the original Claim 4.

Claim 13 has been amended to depend from Claim 11, instead of Claim 12.

Claim 14 has been amended to depend from Claim 11, instead of Claim 13. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced. The Applicant further

believes that the amended Claim 14 is supported at least in paragraph 39 of the original specification.

Claim 15 has been amended to depend from Claim 11, instead of Claim 12.

Claim 16 has been amended to remove a claim limitation found in amended Claim 11 from which amended Claim 16 depends, and to more clearly recite the invention. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced. The Applicant further believes that the amended Claim 16 is supported at least in paragraph 10 of the original specification.

Claim 17 and to more clearly recite the invention and to provide antecedent support. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced.

The Applicant believes that Claims 12-17 are allowable for at least the reasons of Claim 11 from which they depend directly or indirectly.

Claim 18 has been amended to reflect relevant limitations of Claim 20 of Kleker '106. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 18 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 20 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced. For example, the amended Claim 18 includes insertion of the phrase "providing stationary support for," which is supported at least in paragraph 28, last sentence of the original specification, specifically "A hanger alignment mechanism may also be used to secure the garments in a relatively fixed position during the operating cycle."

Claim 19 has been canceled.

Claim 20 has been amended to reflect relevant limitations of Claim 11 of Kleker '106. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 20 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 11 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter

has been introduced and believes that amended Claim 20 is supported for at least the same reasons as discussed in regard to amended Claim 11 of the current application.

Claim 21 has been amended to reflect relevant limitations of Claim 11 of Kleker '106. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 21 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 11 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced and believes that amended Claim 21 is supported for at least the same reasons as discussed in regard to amended Claim 11 of the current application.

Claim 22 has been amended to reflect relevant limitations of Claim 11 of Kleker '106. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 22 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 11 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced and believes that amended Claim 22 is supported for at least the same reasons as discussed in regard to amended Claim 11 of the current application.

Claim 23 has been amended to reflect relevant limitations of Claim 1 of Kleker '106. The Applicant believes that amended Claim 23 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 1 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced. For example, the amended Claim 23 includes insertion of the phrase "stationary position in an enclosure," which is supported at least in paragraph 28, last sentence of the original specification, specifically, "A hanger alignment mechanism may also be used to secure the garments in a relatively fixed position during the operating cycle."

Claim 24 has been amended to remove a claim limitation found in amended Claim 23, from which it depends, and to more clearly recite the invention. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced. The Applicant further believes that the amended Claim 12 is supported at least in Claim 10 of the original specification.

Claims 25 and 26 are original and depend directly from Claim 23. The Applicant believes that Claims 24-26 are allowable for at least the reasons of Claim 23 from which they depend.

Claim 27 is a new claim depending from Claim 4. Claim 27 includes limitations deleted from the original Claim 4. The deletion was to cure an ambiguity in the original Claim 4. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced.

Claim 28 is a new claim reciting relevant limitations of Claim 3 of Kleker '106. New Claim 28 is proposed to more clearly recite the invention. The Applicant believes that new Claim 28 is allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 3 of Kleker '106 stands allowed. The Applicant avers that no new matter has been introduced in new Claim 28.

The prior art made of record is noted. However, it is believed that the secondary references are no more pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure than the primary references cited in the office action. Therefore, it is believed that a detailed discussion of the secondary references is not deemed necessary for a full and complete response to this office action. Accordingly, allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

In conclusion, having addressed all issues set out in the office action, the Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

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